

**REMARKS OF SENATOR AMY KLOBUCHAR
APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES AND
GENERAL GOVERNMENT HEARING
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Good morning. First, I would like to thank you, Chairman Durbin, for holding this hearing today and thank you for all of the good work you have been doing to protect American consumers. I also thank this Subcommittee for its work to provide more resources to the Consumer Product Safety Commission to do its job. One guy sitting in an office charged with ensuring the safety of \$22 billion worth of toys just isn't going to work.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of my Commerce Committee colleagues. I applaud Chairman Pryor's efforts to provide the Consumer Product Safety Commission with the tools it needs to ensure that it can properly protect consumers, and I am pleased to have joined with Senator Nelson in cosponsoring legislation that would require third party testing of children's products.

This issue has hit home in our state in a very tragic way. Last year, four-year-old Jarnell Brown died after swallowing a heart shaped charm he received for free with a pair of shoes. He didn't die from swallowing the toy; he didn't die as a result of choking on it. He died because the charm was composed almost entirely of lead - enough lead to fatally poison him. In fact, the charm contained so much lead that tests later revealed that the charm was ninety-nine percent lead. His blood lead level was three times higher than what health officials consider dangerous. That charm - that free charm - was made in China. What is most tragic about this little boy's death is that it was preventable. He never should have had access to the toy he was playing with in the first place.

As a parent of a 12 year old, I am alarmed by recent reports showing a significant increase in the number of toys manufactured in China found to be unsafe. For months, news of recalled toys - like these Thomas the Tank Engines I have right here - has dominated our headlines. As a mom and a former prosecutor, I find it totally unacceptable that toys containing a known toxin are continuing to make their way into children's hands. This shouldn't happen in this day and age. Or as my twelve-year-old daughter said when her favorite Barbies were recalled - "Mom, this is serious."

It is clear that we must take action to remove these toxic toys from our shores and from our stores. Parents have the right to expect that toys are tested and problems found before they reach a toy box.

To achieve this goal, I have introduced two pieces of legislation: the first makes it easier to identify recalled products and illegal to sell them. The second will effectively ban lead from children's products.

My legislation provides that lead in any children's product shall be treated as a "banned hazardous substance." As millions of toys are being pulled from store shelves for fear of

lead contamination, its time to make it crystal clear that lead has no place in children's products. The bill would set a ceiling for a trace level of lead and empowers the CPSC to lower this ceiling even further through rule-making as science and technology allow. This legislation will set clear standards for manufacturers, and speed the enforcement process for the CPSC.

For thirty years, we've been aware of the dangers posed to children by lead paint. It is time to change our current system of voluntary guidelines and use the force of law to get the lead out of the hands and mouths of our children. Lead has no place in children's products.

The other legislation I have introduced would make it easier for parents to identify a recalled toy already in their home. Countless parents have approached me to ask how they could possibly identify a toxic toy, and as a Mom I can tell you it is hard to tell one Barbie from another. A simple stamp added to the packaging and the toy itself will make it easy for parents to pick up the toy and match the stamps, recognize, and remove that unsafe toy from their child's hands.

The legislation will also make it illegal to sell a recalled toy, taking action against those bad actors out there who are knowingly leaving recalled products on their shelves or placing them for sale online.

We've seen too many headlines this summer to sit around and think this problem is going to solve itself. We can't just sit around bemoaning the recalls ó it is time to act.